

Dorney Road Landfill

EPA Region 3

Pennsylvania
Lehigh and Berks
Counties

8 miles southwest of
Allentown

EPA ID# PAD980508832

15th Congressional District

Last Update:

August 2002

Other Names:

Oswald Landfill

Current Site Status

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency issued cleanup orders in 1988 to 12 parties who were partially responsible for the contamination at the Dorney Road Landfill. A design for the project was started in 1991 and completed in June 1995. The actual cleanup process began in spring 1998, delayed by lack of access to the property. Construction of a cap for the landfill was completed in September 1999.

In 1991, EPA selected a cleanup method for groundwater, which includes continued groundwater monitoring and providing wellhead treatment units to residences, if the wells tested above safe levels. The baseline sampling was conducted in March 1999 for residential wells and landfill monitoring wells. The results indicated that there were no wells above action levels, therefore, no residential wellhead treatment units were required.

Site Description

The site is located in Upper Macungie Township, Lehigh County with a small portion of the site extending into Longswamp Township in Berks County. The Dorney Road Landfill site was an open-pit iron mine before it became a 27-acre municipal and industrial landfill from 1952 to 1978. The state inspected the site in 1970 and discovered that industrial sludge, batteries, and barrels of petroleum products were disposed of on site. The site is surrounded by rural residences and farmland, although housing developments have been constructed in recent years. The farmland near the site is used to grow soybeans, corn and wheat for human and animal consumption. The aquifer under the site is the primary source of water for local residents and the farm animals in the area. Groundwater contamination has migrated off site, and possibly into a residential well to the southeast of the site. There are approximately 20 people within a one-quarter mile radius of the site. The nearest resident lives 1,000 feet away from the site. Deer, waterfowl, and pheasant hunting occur seasonally in the area surrounding the site and have been observed on the site premises.

Site Responsibility


Cleanup of this site is the responsibility of Federal and State governments, and parties potentially responsible for site contamination.

NPL Listing History

Our country's most serious, uncontrolled, or abandoned hazardous waste sites can be cleaned using federal money. To be eligible for federal cleanup money, a site must be put on the National Priorities List. This site was proposed on September 8, 1983 and formally added to the list September 21, 1984.

Threats and Contaminants

Contaminants in leachate and groundwater include ketones, vinyl chloride, trichloroethane (TCE), benzene, and the heavy metal, arsenic. Soils contain the pesticide dieldrin, as well as lead and chromium.

Contaminant descriptions and associated risk factors are available on the Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry, an arm of the CDC, web site at <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/hazdat.html> 

Cleanup Progress

EPA regraded the site and installed surface water runoff controls to stop the movement of contaminated surface water in 1986. Also, a fence was placed around the site to limit public access. The state and EPA signed a cooperative agreement to study the nature and extent of contamination at the site in 1984.

A cleanup method for the landfill was chosen in 1988. It included off-site disposal of 700,000 gallons of on-site pond water; constructing a dike and diversion ditch system; reshaping surface contours; installing a multi-layer landfill cap and a gas collection system; conducting groundwater monitoring; limiting access through deed restrictions and a perimeter fence; and restricting building in the area. In addition, in 1991, the EPA decided to allow the sedimentation ponds required to control runoff to serve a multiple purpose of containing runoff, mitigating wetlands and becoming quality habitat for the varied wildlife at the site.

The construction of the landfill cap was completed September 1999. The groundwater monitoring of residential and landfill wells was initiated in March 1999. The results indicated that there have been no wells above action levels, therefore, no residential wellhead treatment units have been required. The monitoring program will continue until EPA deems it no longer necessary. The preliminary closeout report was issued on September 28, 1999.

Contacts

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Detailed public files (Administrative Record) on EPA's actions and decisions for this site can be examined at the following locations:

Upper Macungie Township Building

8330 Schantz Road

Breinigsville, PA 18031

610-395-4892

U.S. EPA Region III

6th Floor Docket Room

1650 Arch Street

Philadelphia, PA 19103

215-814-3157

Please call to schedule an appointment.